(c) and (d) The matter of quick and timely disposal of cases pending in the courts is within the exclusive domain of the judiciary and though Government has taken a number of steps to facilitate reduction of arrears of cases pending in the courts, it does not issue instructions to the courts with regard to the period within which to dispose of cases.

Reservation for women in Legislative bodies and political parties

386. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI DARA SINGH:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the issue of reserving seats for women in Parliament and State Assemblies had dragged on for 11 years since it was first mooted in 1997;

(b) whether UPA Government is agreeable to the proposal mooted by the Election Commission making it mandatory for political parties to earmark 33 per cent seats for women; and

(c) if so, whether Government proposes to bring forward a law for this purpose in the current Budget Session of Parliament so that it could be implemented for the Lok Sabha polls due in 2009?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The United Progressive Alliance Government in its National Common Minimum Programme issued on 27.5.2004 has stated that it will take the lead to introduce legislation for 1/3rd reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and in the Legislative Assemblies of States. Efforts have accordingly since being made, by the Government in the direction of evolving political consensus on re-introduction of the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament. United Progressive Alliance held a meeting of the constituents of the Alliance and the Left parties on the 22nd August, 2005 to evolve a consensus Subsequently, a meeting with the leaders of the national Democratic Alliance and other political leaders was held on 24th August, 2005. Three proposals relating to Women Reservation Bill were considered *inter alia* includes the proposal of the Election Commission of India which is commonly known as the Gill formula to make it mandatory for the recognized political parties to ensure putting of minimum agreed percentage for women in State Assembly and parliamentary elections so as to allow them to retain the recognition with the Election Commission as political parties. All proposals including Gill formula are under consideration of the Government.

Recommendations of Delimitation Commission

387. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delimitation Commission has submitted its recommendations;

(b) if so, the main recommendations of the Commission; and

(c) whether the same have been given effect to and the steps taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) The Delimitation Commission has so far issued final Orders in respect of 25 States/Union territories. In purusance of section 10A of the Delimitation Act, 2002, the delimitation exercise in respect of the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland have been deferred *vide* four Orders dated 8th February, 2008. Further, section 10B of the said Act nullified the Delimitation Commission's Orders issues with respect to the State of Jharkhand. Thus, the delimitation exercise in respect of all the States except the State of Jammu and Kashmir has been completed. In pursuance of the second proviso to article 82 and the second proviso to clause (3) of article 170 of the Constitution, the Presidential Order has been issued on the 19th February, 2008 making delimitation Orders effective from immediate effect in all the 22 States/Union territories except in the States of Tripura and Meghalaya where the delimitation Order shall take effect on the 20th March, 2008 after the election to the Legislative Assemblies in these States are over on 19-03-2008.

Backlog of cases in courts

388. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a huge backlog of court cases;

(b) whether there is demand for establishing about 5,000 more courts to deal with the pending cases; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) A total of 2,89,86,205 cases are reported pending in the District & Subordinate Courts and the various High Courts as on 30.9.2007 out of which 37,00,223 cases are pending in the various High Courts. In the Supreme Court 46,926 cases are reported pending as on 31.12.2007.

(b) and (c) With a view to making a substantial impact in reduction of arrears of pending cases in courts, the Government has introduced 'The Gram Nyayalays Bill, 2007' for establishing 5067 Gram Nyayalayas. This Bill will enable setting up of more trial courts in the country at the intermediate Pachayat level. These courts would provide justice in relatively ordinary civil and criminal cases to the rural population. The procedure to be followed by these courts has also been kept simple and flexible so that cases can be heard and disposed of within 90 days' period. It is also envisaged that these courts would be mobile and would hear the parties in their respective villages to achieve the goal of providing justice to the people at their doorsteps.

Pending cases in Supreme Court and High Courts

389. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of cases pending in Supreme Court and High Courts as on the 31st December, 2007; and

(b) the steps being taken to speed up the disposal of the long pending cases in the courts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) A total of 46,926 cases were pending in the Supreme Court on 31st December, 2007. A Statement indicating total number of cases reported pending, as per latest available information, in the High Courts is enclosed (*See* below).